

MVTA Update

January 2007

STRATEGIC AREA LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Next Board Meeting: Jan. 24 at Eagan Bus Garage

The next meeting of the MVTA Board is Wednesday, Jan. 24 at 4:30 p.m. at the Eagan Bus Garage. Please be sure to notify MVTA staff if you will be unable to attend this meeting.

Strategic Planning Workshop Set for Jan. 31

Board members are reminded to keep their calendars clear on Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2007 from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. for a Strategic Planning Workshop. Details will follow a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee.

Suburban Transit Association Providers Meet First Friday of Each Month

The Suburban Transit Association Providers (STAP) have set the first Friday of each month at 1 p.m. as their regular meeting date and time during the Legislative session. The Legislative Agenda is being prepared for adoption this month.

STRATEGIC AREA PLANNING

Facilities Update

BTS Renovation Nears Completion

Renovation of MVTA offices at the Burnsville Transit Station nears completion as sub-contractors paint walls, install carpeting and add case-work in the 2nd level space at BTS. Furniture is



Customer Service Representative Peter Feuk, at this desk, in the new offices located on the first level of the Burnsville Transit Station



Left: Stairway entry to the Burnsville Transit Station Upper Level; Right: Customer Service Area on Lower Level; below: New Conference Room at BTS.

scheduled to be installed the last week of January and MVTA staff will return to the newly renovated space shortly thereafter. .



MVTA Staff Participates in Discussion Regarding Pilot Knob Road Improvements

MVTA Operations and Facilities staff met with Dakota County, Apple Valley and Lakeville city staff recently to discuss a traffic engineering study of the Pilot Knob Road corridor in southern Dakota County. The county and cities are investigating the possibility of intersection access changes intended to improve traffic flow along Pilot Knob Road. MVTA staff communicated the agency's belief that any access restrictions at Pilot Knob Road and 157th Street would be counter-intuitive and detrimental to the public's ability to use, and the agency's ability to provide service from, the 157th Street Transit Station recently built by Dakota County and operated by MVTA.

STRATEGIC AREA

SERVICE DELIVERY

Palomino Hills Park & Ride Safety Issues

MVTA Operations and Facilities Managers met with City of Apple Valley staff to discuss the possibility of creating a curb cut-out and pedestrian crosswalk on the westbound side of Pennock Avenue at the Palomino Hills Park & Ride, due to safety concerns. This area continues to be unsafe for riders alighting and crossing Pennock and stopped buses. Staff hopes to create a partnership with the city to resolve these issues.

Additionally, the Facilities Manager and Customer Relations Manager spoke with Christus Victor Lutheran Church personnel regarding transit riders parking in spaces designated for church use. The MVTA has agreed to re-sign the areas for church parking, as well as has established an alliance with a towing company that will place a "boot" on a vehicle that is illegally parked and the car cannot be moved until the towing company has been contacted and the fine paid to the towing company. This, then, does not cost the church or the MVTA anything for the towing services.

Burnsville Bus Bench Placement

MVTA Operations Manager is working with City of Burnsville staff to identify ideal bus bench locations within the city to place more attractive benches. The city currently has some 60 bus benches, and many of these are located in areas that MVTA routes no longer serve, or are under-utilized. MVTA staff is collecting data to help the city determine appropriate bus bench locations. In addition to determining appropriate locations, city staff will be soliciting proposals for more attractive, functional benches. A portion of these benches will include the new MVTA logo.

MVTA Planning for March Service Changes

Service changes to take place as of March 10 have been drafted by MVTA Planner, Michael Abegg, reviewed by MVTA's Executive Director and Operations and Customer Service Staff. Input has also been solicited from MVTA's providers. Of particular note is the discontinuation of route 489 service to Ecolab (too little ridership to maintain service) and Saturday Route 466 between Burnsville and downtown Minneapolis (riders will need to travel to the Mall of America and transfer to the light rail train). Additionally, the MVTA is considering dropping service on Route 425 (service to Best Buy and west Bloomington), due to the small number of riders. However, discussions are ongoing with Best Buy and a final decision will not be made about that route until discussions are complete.

STRATEGIC AREA IMAGE

Eastview Students Create Bus Panels

Again this year, students at Eastview High School have created interior bus panels as part of their class requirement. Panels focus on two areas: promoting transit and promoting school pride/activities. The panels will be placed on display inside MVTA buses. MVTA staff select the winning entries.

Driver of the Year Awards Program set for February 28

Drivers will be honored on Feb. 28, following the MVTA Board Meeting, with an awards program at the Cherokee Sirloin Room in Eagan. Drivers from Laidlaw Transit Services and from Schmitt & Sons Transit will be recognized. Additionally, Laidlaw Operations Manager Damon Banks will be recognized for his contributions to the MVTA and to the transit industry.

Cedar Avenue Open House set for February 13

The next Open House regarding the Cedar Avenue BRT Corridor is set for 3:30-6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 13 at the Dakota County Western Service Center Atrium.

STRATEGIC AREA PERSONNEL

Temporary Employee Hired to Assist with MVTA Move

To help with the unpacking of boxes from all file drawers, cabinets, bookcases and more, the MVTA has employed a temporary employee for one week. Mike Strandjord, from Jeanne Thorne, will be with the MVTA to help prepare for the move.

MVTA Planner Participates in Final Round of Hastus Training

Michael Abegg is completing the final four days of training on the new scheduling system purchased last year. He has previously had introductory training here and mid-term training in Montreal. The final session is taking place in the new Burnsville Transit Station offices.

MVTA Fleet Maintenance Manager Participates in New Flyer Training

Glenn Boden is participating in three days of training about the New Flyer buses that are part of the MVTA fleet. The training is taking place at the Eagan Bus Garage.

STRATEGIC AREA FINANCE

News from the Finance Department

- Staff is preparing a formal Request for Proposal for operating and maintenance services. The plan is to release the RFP in May 2007, receive proposals in June 2007 and award the contract at the September Board meeting. Start-up of service under the new contract will be December 31, 2007, before the holiday weekend.
- MVTA has received the final MVST payment for the year. MVST for 2006 came in at \$8.5 million compared to the budget of \$9.2 million or 7.8 percent under budget. The chart is attached.

MVTA Ridership to Reach Record High

MVTA's Annual Ridership has reached a record high of 2,332,702. The MVTA expects to provide its 25 millionth ride in the third week of February 2007.

